

Governor's Welcome

Thank you, *Kathy (Kathy Swan, chair of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education)*, Commissioner Russell, college leaders and honored guests.

It's a pleasure to welcome our presidents, chancellors and members of governing boards from all across and our state. I'd also like to recognize Rich Novak, Senior Vice President for the Association of Governing Boards, for his leadership. This forum is an opportunity for all of you — as the drivers of educational attainment and academic quality for your institutions — to share innovations and best practices.

Today also marks another milestone for Missouri, continuing the strong progress we've made together on my public agenda for higher education in four key areas: **attainment**, **academic review**, **collaboration** and **funding**.

The legislation I am about to sign, House Bill 1042, will remove many of the obstacles that block the route to degree attainment for hundreds of thousands of Missourians.

It will accelerate the push to reach my goal of increasing the percentage of working-age adults holding post-secondary credentials from about 35 percent today, to 60 percent by 2020.

This bill had its roots in a Complete College America best-practices workshop Missouri attended more than a year ago. So it's especially fitting that Stan Jones, the founder and president of CCA, is your luncheon speaker today.

Sen. David Pearce and Rep. Mike Thomson set to work a year ago to craft legislation that would help college students carry the ball all the way to the goalpost and attain a college degree. I'd like to thank them both for their outstanding advocacy and leadership on this vital issue.

House Bill 1042 will improve remediation, align curriculum from high school to college, improve course transfer across higher education institutions, and help additional students who have received enough credits for an associate's degree get that credential. By expediting reverse transfers, this legislation will help some of the 750,000 Missourians with some college credits continue in school, complete their coursework, and earn their degrees.

This important legislation comes at a critical time. By two-thousand eighteen, nearly two-thirds of all jobs in the United States will require some kind of post-secondary education.

Higher education is the key to Missouri's sustained economic progress and quality of life, and essential to our nation's ability to compete and win in a global economy. Any Missouri student who works hard and wants to attend college should have that opportunity.

Very quickly, I'd like to review the substantial progress we've made since I became Governor.

From Day One, I have focused on keeping the cost of college within reach for thousands of hard-working Missouri families. At a time when tuition skyrocketed in many other states – by as much as 32 percent – we kept tuition flat at all our public colleges and universities for two consecutive years. The average tuition increase at our four-year public institutions was the lowest in the nation for the past three years. Your continued commitment to restraining tuition has helped make Missouri a leader in affordable, quality public education.

As a result, enrollment at our public colleges has **surged** over the past three years, setting records each fall. That's great news for our students, our schools and the future of our state. That also has helped push us closer toward that 60 percent attainment goal.

During challenging budget years, we provided stable funding for all our state financial aid programs: A+, Bright Flight, and Access Missouri.

We have dramatically expanded the A+ Schools program, giving thousands more students two years of free tuition at Missouri's community colleges and the opportunity to enter the workforce debt-free. Since I took office, **148 more public high schools** have earned the A+ designation, and the number of students participating has risen **30 percent**.

In response to my call for more strategic and efficient delivery of academic programs, the Department of Higher Education conducted a comprehensive, statewide academic program review. It resulted in the elimination of 118 underperforming degree programs, with 175 more flagged for review in 2014.

The review also revealed the need for **greater enrollment** in degree programs in fields that were identified as vital to Missouri's economic growth and competitiveness, including STEM fields and foreign languages. I look forward to achieving even more strategic use of our resources after the next round of program reviews.

My third agenda item — cooperation and collaboration — set the stage for innovative programs such as the Missouri Learning Commons. This is collaboration among all the state's four-year institutions to develop and share redesigns of large-enrollment undergraduate courses.

Research that shows that course redesign can not only result in significant savings, but also significant **gains in student engagement, learning, and performance**. To kick start this process, I committed \$100,000 in state funds for a statewide study of course redesign. Missouri subsequently received a highly competitive \$250,000 grant from the Gates and Hewlett foundations.

The redesigned courses were pilot-tested this spring, and will be ready for full implementation and enrollment this fall.

Higher education creates more opportunity and drives individuals' earning potential and quality of life.

And we also know that access to a skilled, well-educated workforce is often **the determining factor** when a business or industry is deciding where to build, relocate, or expand.

Launching initiatives like Training for Tomorrow, Caring for Missourians and MoHealthWINS will help ensure that our colleges and universities have the tools they need to train students and workers for 21st Century careers in technology, advanced manufacturing and health care.

Earlier this year, the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg launched the Innovation Campus, a pioneering partnership with the business community that will give high school students a running start on careers in high-demand fields, cut the time it takes to earn a college degree, and sharply reduce student debt.

Students participate in high-impact apprenticeships throughout the college curriculum, allowing businesses to recruit and build their workforce for the future.

We're supporting the UCM Innovation Campus through a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant to underwrite real-world apprenticeships and training opportunities for students at businesses like Cerner, Exergonix Inc., Sprint and DST.

An additional ten million dollars in competitive grants is available to adapt this exciting concept to meet the specific needs of students and businesses on campuses across the state. The proposals for these grants have been received, are being reviewed and these awards will be ready to roll out on July first.

Finally, in response to my call on funding, a higher education task force has developed a performance funding model, in close consultation with representatives of our two- and four-year public universities, my administration and with legislative staff. Those recommendations have been accepted by the CBHE.

The technical details in the model are now being worked out, and a baseline year will be established in Fiscal Year 20-13. In Fiscal Year 20-14, new appropriations above the baseline will be guided by this performance model. This will ensure that our institutions continue to focus on students' success, increase their productivity, and assure the high quality of academic programs while continuing to contain costs.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the spirit of cooperation shown by the institutions you represent. I want to personally convey my thanks for your extraordinary efforts on behalf of thousands of Missouri students and families.

Your resourcefulness leads the state by example. And I am confident that the investments you are making in efficient operations today will pay dividends in the future. Thank you for your continued good faith and hard work, as we move higher education in Missouri forward – together.

And now, before I sign House Bill 1042, I would like to invite the champions of this bill — Senator Pearce and Representative Thomson — to join us by conference call and offer their remarks.

###